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THE NATIONAL DEFENSE POLICY of the UNITED STATES

by

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with the aid of the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

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INTRODUCTION

THE organization of modern armies and the theories underlying the several existing military systems have not been thoroughly comprehended even by that section of public opinion which is sometimes called informed. This failure to appreciate the traditional concept of war on which the organization of armies is built has been especially evident at Geneva, where the Disarmament Conference, prior to its six months' recess on July 15, was laboring with the limitation and reduction of military and naval establishments. The sweeping proposals of President Hoover for a direct cut in the number of men under arms and the proposals for the abolition of so-called aggressive weapons have caught the public imagination by their apparent simplicity, but the challenge which they offer to accepted military theories has been largely overlooked—by the military profession as well as by the general public.

Prevailing military policies have been questioned from many quarters at Geneva. The abolition of aggressive weapons is intended to deprive armies of their offensive power, and to reduce them to a defensive rôle in harmony with the Kellogg pact. This constitutes a direct challenge, whether deliberate or not, to the century-old doctrine of the "Nation in Arms" which holds that the

object of the armed forces is to overcome the will of the enemy to resist, and which embodies mobilization of the total man-power and industrial resources of the state.¹ It likewise challenges the theories adopted in the National Defense Act of June 4, 1920, which are based on the concept of the Nation in Arms.

The theory of the Nation in Arms has been questioned, moreover, by professional military critics as well as by civilian advocates of disarmament. Military experts in a number of countries have begun to ask whether great mass armies as developed in

1. According to the Napoleonic doctrine, the chief mission of armed forces was the destruction of the armed forces of the enemy. This doctrine was developed and elaborated by Carl von Clausewitz, the great German expositor of the Napoleonic concept, who propounded the theory of the "Nation in Arms" and envisaged the mobilization of the entire man-power and resources of the nation in time of war. The World War witnessed the application of this principle on a scale not dreamed of in the lifetime of von Clausewitz, but with results which, according to these critics, refuted his theories. Cf. *What Would be the Character of a New War?* Enquiry Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union; a symposium to which outstanding military writers in many countries have contributed (London, P. S. King and Son, Ltd. 1931). Cf. also Capt. B. H. Liddell Hart, *Paris or the Future of War* (New York, Dutton, 1925); *idem*, *The Remaking of Modern Armies* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1928); *idem*, *The Real War, 1914-1918* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1930); Brig. Gen. J. F. C. Fuller, *The Dragon's Teeth, A Study of War and Peace* (London, Constable and Co., 1932); *idem*, *The Reformation of War* (New York, Dutton, 1923); Major Carl A. Brait, *That Next War* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1931); Maj. Gen. Sir F. Maurice, *British Strategy, A Study of the Application of the Principles of War* (London, Constable and Co., 1929).

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the last war are capable of achieving tactical results, or whether they inevitably defeat their own object. Some, indeed, have branded the traditional doctrines entirely futile. A British military authority, Gen. J. F. C. Fuller, has gone so far as to assert that "the autumn and winter of 1914 saw the burst of the most gigantic military South Sea Bubble which the history of war bears record of."² The employment of mass armies resulted in complete deadlock, immobility and tactical stalemate, and "had no other means of waging war been discovered, and had it been possible for the belligerents to endure their losses and the financial strain, the war might well have lasted for a hundred years."³

The objects for which nations maintain armed forces have also been subjected to critical scrutiny. The American delegation at Geneva, for example, challenged the basis on which nations have justified their levels of armaments in the past. In February and again in April, Ambassador Hugh Gibson, acting head of the American delegation, submitted a plan by which military forces would be limited to the strength required for two express purposes: (1) to maintain internal order; (2) to defend the *national territory* against aggression and invasion.⁴

The significance of this proposal is obvious. While the United States, like all other great powers, has always professed a purely "defensive" policy, it has not, since Washington's time, restricted the objects of its military policy to defense of the national territory. During the past century many other objects for which armed forces are maintained have been set forth, including the defense of "sovereign rights," the "protection of life and property abroad," the defense of "neutral rights," the "protection of commerce on the high seas," "respect for the flag," and even "to make the world safe for democracy." President Taft added yet another object

when he advocated a strong army and navy as "the best means of securing respect for the assertion of our rights, the defense of our interests, and the exercise of our influence in international matters."⁵ President Roosevelt demanded armed forces strong enough to defend "our own certain foreign policies."⁶ Despite the promulgation of the Kellogg Pact for the renunciation of war "as an instrument of national policy," War Department manuals still assert that "a sound military policy comprises the adoption and application of measures necessary for national defense and for the protection and the promotion of national policies."⁷

In view of the new international commitments referred to by Mr. Gibson, including the Kellogg Pact and the Covenant of the League of Nations, it is pertinent to ask how many of the objects listed above are any longer legitimate reasons for the maintenance of armies and navies. Is it possible, for example, to justify the retention of armed forces for "the promotion of national policies?" Is the maintenance of a large army and navy for "the exercise of our influence in international matters" compatible with our obligation to seek the settlement of disputes only by pacific means? And finally, are armed forces the best means of securing national rights?

It is a basic principle of military strategy that the political object of war must be within the military means.⁸ Would it, for example, be within the military means of a non-member of the League of Nations to enforce what it regarded as its rights as a neutral against fifty-four countries which had determined to enforce a blockade against an aggressor state?⁹ Just how far is it possible for a state to enforce by military action the protection of life and property abroad, or to demand complete respect for "rights" which that nation regards as essential to its sovereignty, its dignity, or its prestige?

ORIGIN OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT

This report describes briefly the origin of the National Defense Act, and examines the present military organization of the United States in relation to our defense requirements and the disarmament proposals supported by President Hoover.

It is frequently asserted that the National Defense Act of June 4, 1920 gave the United

States "its first real military policy." In April 1932, when the Appropriations Committee of the House proposed a reduction of 2,000 officers in the Regular Army and temporary elimination of certain reserve activities, the move was challenged in Congress as a direct attack upon the basic principles

² Fuller, *What Would be the Character of a New War?* cited, p. 55.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁴ League of Nations, *Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments*. Speech of Ambassador Hugh Gibson, Conference Document P.V.5, p. 1-4. President Hoover's proposal of June 22 employed the phrase "defense against foreign attack" rather than "to defend the national territory"; while these terms are not identical, both restrict the object of defense to definite limits.

⁵ *Inaugural Address*, March 4, 1909.

⁶ *Message to Congress*, December 2, 1902.

⁷ *Military Organization of the United States* (The General Service Schools, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas).

⁸ Cf. Maurice, *British Strategy—A Study of the Application of the Principles of War*, cited, p. 86.

⁹ Secretary Stimson, in his speech of June 8, 1932, presented an interpretation of the Kellogg Pact in which he implied that neutral rights, based on the legality of war, had no place in a system in which war had been declared illegal. (Cf. *New York Times*, August 9, 1932.)

of the National Defense Act. The proposed economies were said to "cut the heart out of this great national defense program"—"the only real constructive military legislation we had had by Congress since 1798."¹¹

Reference to American military history, to the debates in Congress during the passage of the National Defense Act, and to the expert testimony presented by military and civilian authorities at the time casts considerable doubt upon the validity of these assertions. The record shows that the National Defense Act, like most similar legislation, is a compromise between conflicting theories, and that it did not, at the time of its adoption, represent the unanimous opinion either of the War Department, the reserve organizations, or Congress.

The National Defense Act, moreover, is not a military policy; rather is it a system of military organization. It sets up a form of organization which implies the existence of a military policy, but does not define the objectives it is presumably designed to achieve. This distinction is recognized by some military authorities. General Summerall, when Chief of Staff, wrote that "provision for the organization of these several forces [in the National Defense Act] . . . does not bring into existence a military policy. These several elements exist only as a means for effecting a progressive mobilization of the man-power . . ."¹² Nevertheless, the popular misconception that the National Defense Act lays down a military policy persists both in Congress and in the War Department.

OPPOSING THEORIES FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE

For more than forty years before the passage of the National Defense Act in 1920, there had been two conflicting theories of military organization. One theory held that the defense needs of the United States could best be met by an organized citizens' militia; the other theory advocated a well-organized standing army, to be expanded in time of war by the induction of trained reserves.

Advocates of the militia type of military organization claimed that their system represented the "traditional policy of the United States," recommended by George Washington and relied upon through more than a hundred years of American history. President Wilson expressed this "traditional policy" in his first message to Congress after the outbreak of the World War in December 1914:

"We must depend in every time of national peril, in the future as in the past, not upon a standing army, nor yet upon a reserve army, but upon a citizenry trained and accustomed to arms."¹³

^{10.} Cf. *Congressional Record*, speech of Representative Martin, April 30, 1932, p. 9620; of Representative Beedy, May 17, 1932, p. 10848.

The opposing theory, which was based on an expansible standing army, was first formulated by a Regular Army officer and student of American military history, General Emory Upton. Following a tour around the world in 1875-1877, Upton devoted the remainder of his life to a study of the military policy of the United States. This work was interrupted by his death in 1881 and the manuscript of his book remained unpublished until 1904 when Elihu Root, then Secretary of War, ordered its publication by the government.

Upton's book was primarily a history of American military policy from the Revolution through the Civil War; it was used, however, as a powerful argument against "the traditional American policy" and a plea for military reform. Upton argued that the traditional reliance upon militia and untrained citizens had resulted in unnecessary military disasters and delays in every war in which the nation had participated. The chief causes of the weakness of the American system, according to Upton, were the "employment of militia and undisciplined troops commanded by officers utterly ignorant of the military art; reliance upon voluntary enlistments . . . the intrusion of the States in military affairs" Upton recommended a standing army large enough to meet our defensive requirements, to be organized in time of peace "on the expansible principle and in proportion to the population." He would have abolished the National Guard of the various states and instituted in its place a federal reserve force composed of national volunteers and a militia—the national volunteers to be officered and supported by the government.¹⁴

The first conflict between the Uptonian principle of an expansible standing army and the traditional militia system came in 1916, with the passage of the first National Defense Act a year before the United States' entry into the World War. The War Department General Staff, which had been created in 1904, advocated the organization of a national army on the basis of Upton's

^{11.} "Final report of the Chief of Staff," November 20, 1930, published in *Annual Report of Secretary of War*, 1930, p. 93.

^{12.} *Message to Congress*, December 8, 1914. One of the strongest advocates of the militia system, both before and after the National Defense Act of 1920, was Brig. General John McAuley Palmer, who brought Washington to the side of advocates of the militia system. In his *Sentiments on a Peace Establishment*, written in May 1783, Washington advocated a small standing army for defense of frontier posts and protection against the Indians, and a "well regulated militia" for the emergency of war. Washington rejected the idea of a large standing army as unnecessary, costly, and dangerous to the institutions of liberty and independence. He wanted enough professional soldiers to garrison the frontier posts, but no more. His "well regulated militia" was to be "enlisted or drafted to form a Corps in every State capable of resisting any sudden impression which might be attempted by a Foreign enemy . . ." Cf. John McA. Palmer, *Washington, Lincoln, Wilson*, (New York, Doubleday, Doran, 1930), Appendix I.

^{13.} Bvt. Maj. Gen. Emory Upton, *Military Policy of the United States* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1917, Fourth Edition). For a criticism of Upton's research, cf. Palmer, *Washington, Lincoln, Wilson*, cited, Chap. 24.

theories; Congress supported a bill to develop the National Guard as the foundation of our national defense. President Wilson finally approved the House bill and urged its adoption. Secretary of War Garrison, who had supported the General Staff plan, resigned and was succeeded by Newton D. Baker. The result, according to one critic, was a "hodge-podge of two mutually antagonistic systems."¹⁴ The Act provided for increasing the Regular Army on the one hand, and for increasing the National Guard on the other. It also provided for a system of citizens' military training in schools and colleges and in summer training camps. The citizens' training plan, however, was originally intended to fit into the General Staff scheme, independent of National Guard training.

The second conflict between the two theories came in 1919 and 1920, and once again the War Department and Congress were at odds. During the interval the United States had participated in the World War, had mobilized a national army of 4,000,000 men and transported to Europe an expeditionary force of 2,000,000 which had played an important rôle in the final Allied offensive. With the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, the country found itself with a military organization "which was completely different . . . from that prescribed by law . . . and from that which had existed before the United States entered the War."¹⁵ It was this new organization which the War Department sought to perpetuate as the basis for the future military organization of the United States.

For more than a year, beginning in the spring of 1919, Congress debated the various plans for national defense presented by the War Department and the Military Affairs committees of the House and the Senate.¹⁶

14. Palmer, *Washington, Lincoln, Wilson*, cited, p. 318. Cf. also, John Dickinson, *The Building of an Army* (New York, Century, 1922).

15. *Hearings before the sub-committee of the Committee on Military Affairs, U. S. Senate, 66 Congress, 2nd Session* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1920), Vol. I, p. 27-66. Testimony of General Peyton C. March, Chief of Staff.

16. The most important of these bills, which were finally merged in the Act of June 4, 1920, were the following:

1. The War Department bill, prepared under the direction of the Chief of Staff, providing for a Regular Army of 576,000 officers and enlisted men, and providing three months' universal training for all male citizens of the United States during their nineteenth year. Sixty-sixth Congress, 1st Session, S. 2715.

2. The Wadsworth bill, prepared by the Senate Committee on Military Affairs and reported in January 1920, providing for a smaller Regular Army of 280,000 enlisted men, a citizens' army composed of organized reserves subject to military service only in time of war, and the National Guard composed of volunteers available for military service within the several states. A four-months' period of compulsory military training was provided. Sixty-sixth Congress, 2nd Session, S. 3792; cf. also *Senate Report No. 400*.

3. The Kahn bill, prepared by the House Committee on Military Affairs and reported in February 1920, providing for a comparatively small Regular Army of professional soldiers, backed by a large reserve of citizen officers and an organized militia or National Guard, subject to considerable federal supervision and liable in time of war to be drafted into the army for general military service. Sixty-sixth Congress, 2nd Session, H. R. 12775; cf. also *House of Representatives, Report No. 680*.

The issue was drawn between advocates of (1) an expansible regular army and (2) a citizens' army built around the National Guard, with the War Department urging the largest Regular Army in the history of the nation and Congress supporting retention of the National Guard. In one respect, however, the conflicting projects were in full accord; all were predicated on the assumption that in modern war there is no adequate measure of defense short of the mobilized man-power and industrial resources of the nation. This was the basic assumption underlying all the proposed legislation; this was the lesson learned from the World War, despite the fact that the application of the doctrine of the Nation in Arms had "reduced warfare to stagnation and generalship to attrition."¹⁷

In embracing this nineteenth century European concept, however, neither Congress nor the War Department paused to consider the probable need for such an elaborate military machine as would be required for immediate mobilization, or the reaction of the American public to a system demanding compulsory military training. Throughout the debate there was no fundamental discussion of military policy as distinct from military organization; there was no attempt to define the objects which the armed forces were to accomplish, or to develop a military policy in harmony with national and foreign policies of the government. At the very time that President Wilson was in Paris urging a League of Nations and a program for universal disarmament, Secretary Baker was pleading in Congress for a Regular Army of more than half a million men. Senator Hiram Johnson vainly sought some explanation of the international situation which required such an army, while General March, Chief of Staff, blandly told the Senate in August 1919 that the War Department program "was framed on its merits, without any relation whatever to national politics or international politics."¹⁸

PLAN OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT

In accepting the premise of the Nation in Arms, the War Department advocated an expansible Regular Army, composed of a "skeletonized" permanent force of over 576,000 men, supported by a federal reserve force built upon a system of three months' compulsory military training, as the best means of achieving this end. The distribution of the forces was not to be controlled by Congress, as in the past, but was to be left to the Chief of Staff, acting under the President. The plan called for a Regular Army of twenty infantry divisions, one cavalry di-

17. Liddell Hart, *The Real War*, cited, p. 268.

18. *Hearings before the sub-committee of the Committee on Military Affairs*, cited, p. 60.

vision, and one artillery brigade. Three divisions were to be used for garrisoning the outlying possessions—the Philippines, Hawaii and the Panama Canal—the remaining eighteen divisions were to be used for training purposes in the United States and stationed for this purpose at seventeen large training camps. The total personnel of 576,000 (including 29,000 officers), was regarded as the minimum necessary to carry out this program. General March declared that the Regular Army could not be skeletonized any further without sacrificing its dual function as an active army prepared for emergencies and a training force for the reserve.¹⁹

The military training program was an essential part of the War Department scheme. The War Plans Division of the General Staff had originally favored a nine-months' compulsory service system, which was vetoed by General March and Secretary Baker. The three-months' training period, however, was regarded by a majority of the General Staff as insufficient to train raw recruits in order to make them available for mobilization. General Pershing favored at least six months' training; General Summerall, General Wood, General O'Ryan and many others likewise insisted that more than three months' training was essential if the plan for general mobilization was to be carried out effectively.

To sum up, therefore, the chief features of the carefully prepared plan of national defense recommended by the War Department were a standing army of 576,000 officers and men organized into five army corps and twenty-one divisions, supported by a reserve force under Regular Army supervision and prepared by three months' compulsory training, the organization and distribution of these forces being under the control of the Chief of Staff of the Regular Army. In event of war the skeletonized army would be expanded to its full war strength by increasing each division from 16,000 to 27,000 men and incorporating new units from a first contingent of the trained reserves to bring the total force to a strength of 1,250,000 men. This force would be immediately available for the national defense, while additional units were being mobilized, under the draft, from young men who had received their three months' training.²⁰

Before the end of 1919 it became apparent that Congress would not accept the War Department plan. The whole conception of a Regular Army of half a million men ran counter to the American tradition. It eliminated the National Guard as an important element in the national defense and set up, in the words of its critics, a "professional

military oligarchy." The maintenance of a large regular army was criticized on the ground that it could have no peace-time functions, and that it would be wasteful and extremely costly. The War Department estimated that its plan would cost approximately \$900,000,000 a year during the first year;²¹ others, including General Leonard Wood, declared that it would cost well over a billion dollars. Seven-eighths of this cost would be used for maintenance of the Regular Army; one-eighth for the compulsory military training system.²² As a result of these objections, the War Department plan was scrapped and Congress turned to the alternative proposals formulated by the Military Affairs Committees of the Senate and the House with the advice and assistance of supporters of a citizens' army, advocates of the National Guard, and Regular Army officers who were critical of the official War Department plan.

THE CITIZEN ARMY PROPOSAL

The alternative to the War Department plan, as originally suggested, was outlined by General O'Ryan, a National Guard officer who had commanded the Twenty-seventh New York Division in France, and was supported in general by Colonel Palmer, a Regular Army officer, and in some of its provisions by General Leonard Wood and many others. It was based on the same premise as the War Department bill, i.e., that ultimate war strength must rest upon mobilization of the man-power of the nation; but it placed the chief reliance upon a "trained citizen army" and not a professional force.

A citizen army, it was claimed, would be essentially a "defensive army," whereas a large professional force would be construed almost inevitably as a threat by foreign nations.²³ But presumably the advocates of a citizen force, no less than the War Department General Staff, interpreted "defense" in its broadest sense.

The O'Ryan proposal contemplated a national citizen army, which would ultimately have a strength of 1,500,000 men available for immediate mobilization and 1,500,000 in reserve—a force scarcely required for defense of American territory. This army would be organized at the outset from voluntary enlistment of the veterans of the World War and in succeeding years from the graduates of the three months' training courses prescribed in the plan for all young men of nineteen or twenty years of age. The

21. *Ibid.*, p. 48-49.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 514.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 514. Testimony of General O'Ryan. Advocates of the citizen army recognized the need for a small professional force to garrison outlying possessions and the coast defenses of the territorial United States and to assist in training the citizen army. But they would not admit the need of more than 100,000 to 250,000 regulars to perform these legitimate functions of a professional army.

theory was that on completion of their elementary training, young men, instead of being merely listed for service in case of emergency, would be assigned to a unit of the citizen force where they would serve as the National Guard served at the time—approximately eighty hours of drill, rifle practice and instruction each year in weekly installments, plus two weeks of field exercises or manoeuvres in the summer. The National Guard would be merged into this scheme under the provision of the Constitution which gives Congress the power to raise and support armies. This force would be under federal supervision, but not under the direct control of the Regular Army. It would be trained by citizen officers as well as by Regular Army officers.

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT OF 1920

The National Defense Act as finally passed on June 4, 1920 adopted neither of these systems. The War Department bill was rejected in both the Senate and the House, while the citizen army scheme was emasculated by rejection of compulsory military training. Following the elimination of the War Department bill,²⁴ Senator Wadsworth, chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, prepared a bill which carried out some of the major features of the system recommended by General O’Ryan, including compulsory military training. This bill authorized a Regular Army of 280,000 enlisted men and 18,000 officers to garrison overseas possessions, providing a small home force for minor emergencies and a training establishment for the citizen army. The citizen army was to be composed of organized reserves subject to military service only in an emergency. The National Guard was to be composed of volunteers available for military service within the states and a reinforcement for the home forces in military emergencies not requiring the mobilization of the organized reserves. A four months’ period of military training was made compulsory. The Wadsworth bill, however, bestowed the control of the distribution of forces upon the Chief of Staff as required in the original War Department bill.²⁵

Meanwhile Representative Kahn, chair-

man of the House Committee on Military Affairs, had introduced another bill to amend the National Defense Act of 1916, which followed more closely the military organization set up under that Act.²⁶ The House bill not only eliminated all provision for compulsory military training, but also the citizen army as provided in the Senate bill. It recommended an enlisted strength of 299,000 for the Regular Army, supported by a reserve of citizen officers and an organized militia or National Guard. The National Guard system, however, was left unchanged in its essentials and was to be organized under the militia provisions of the Constitution rather than the provision empowering Congress to raise armies. Like the Senate bill and the original War Department bill, however, the House measure gave the Chief of Staff power to prescribe the organization of the various branches of the army. It was this bill which was finally accepted as the basis for the National Defense Act, the Senate withdrawing the Wadsworth bill and reaching a compromise on certain outstanding differences.

The foregoing summary reveals the extent to which the National Defense Act, as finally adopted, departs from the systems originally contemplated both by the War Department and by advocates of a citizen army. The War Department, convinced by its experience in the World War that the needs of the United States required an expandible regular army, was given a system which ran counter to almost every provision it thought essential. The advocates of a citizen army, on the other hand, were defeated in their drive for compulsory military training, which they regarded as essential to the creation of an effective citizen force. The system which finally emerged did not meet the requirements or the desires of either of these two schools of thought, nor did it perpetuate the traditional system under which Congress had exercised complete control over the organization of the army and the distribution of its forces. Instead, it embraced the theory of the European conscript armies, but without providing the one element on which the conscript army depends—a strong and efficient trained reserve.

ARMY ORGANIZATION UNDER THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT

Although public opposition to any form of compulsory training in time of peace effectively prevented the building up of a trained reserve force capable of responding to a general mobilization, Congress nevertheless based the military organization on the theory

of immediate mobilization of the man-power of the nation. The National Defense Act expressly provides that “the organized peace establishment, including the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves shall include all of those divisions and other military organizations necessary to form the basis for a complete and immediate

24. The War Department bill never came to a vote in Congress but was laid aside by the Military Affairs Committees of both the House and the Senate.

25. Sixty-sixth Congress, Second session, S. 3792; cf. also Senate Report No. 400.

26. Sixty-sixth Congress, Second session, H. R. 12775; cf. House Report No. 680.

mobilization for the national defense . . .”²⁷ The Act does not provide the necessary machinery for “complete and immediate mobilization,” nor does it prescribe how the forces are to be organized into brigades, divisions and army corps in order to carry out a mobilization plan. The distribution of existing forces and the preparation of plans for mobilization, under the limitations imposed by the law, are left to the President or, in effect, the Chief of Staff and the War Department General Staff. The duties of the General Staff include the preparation of “plans for national defense, and the use of the military forces for that purpose . . . and the mobilization of the manhood of the nation and its material resources in an emergency.”²⁸

Under this authority the War Department prepares general mobilization plans which call for the employment of the man-power and the economic resources of the nation by successive stages, “to fit the needs of any military situation.”²⁹ The plans for mobilizing man-power are built upon the assumption that Congress will adopt a selective service act immediately on the declaration of “a national emergency.” The proposed draft law, which has been perfected by the War Department, ready for immediate transmission to Congress, is calculated to provide 11,000,000 men between the ages of 21 and 30 from which approximately 4,000,000 will constitute a Class One available for the needs of the Army and Navy during the first twelve months of a “major conflict.” Should the emergency continue, additional recruits, according to War Department calculations, would be drawn from the 800,000 young men reaching the age of registration each year. The selective service system is to be administered by a national director and a national headquarters staff, but is decentralized to each state, to be expanded under the direction of the Governor.³⁰

No limit has been placed on the ultimate man-power requirement in case of an emergency calling for the “maximum effort of the nation,” and apparently the function of the armed forces has not been confined to defense of the national territory, as suggested in the American plan presented to the Disarmament Conference.³¹ A minimum has been fixed “by the necessity for providing for the defense of the country . . . against a possible invading force.” General Summerall, former Chief of Staff, placed this minimum for defense of the territorial United States at approximately 2,000,000 com-

batants, to be made available during the first year of war and to be planned for in time of peace.³² Presumably these requirements would be regarded as insufficient for operations which were not concentrated in a North American theatre of operations.

The plans for mobilizing man-power are supplemented by a system of industrial mobilization developed with equal precision under the general authority conferred by the National Defense Act.

The peace-time establishment provided in the National Defense Act is ostensibly a skeletonized organization capable of rapid expansion in case of war. War Department regulations make a clear distinction between the joint mission of the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves, and the special missions which each of the three components are expected to fulfill in the mobilization plans in the general scheme of national defense. Thus, with a view to mobilization, the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves form the first, second, and third echelons of the Army of the United States. In an emergency requiring general mobilization, the Regular Army is expected to furnish one field army consisting of nine infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions—a total of approximately 300,000 men. The National Guard is expected to contribute two field armies of the same size, and the Organized Reserves three field armies. The total combat forces would approximate 1,800,000 men to be raised during the first twelve months of hostilities. This scheme of mobilization contemplates in principle the initial employment of each echelon in succession, but ultimately combines them into one homogeneous force.³³

THE REGULAR ARMY

The organization of the three components in peace-time is presumably designed to carry out this common mission; the special missions of each force, however, are definitely assigned. Thus the Regular Army is expected to furnish a force ready to take the field at the outbreak of war and to provide a balanced mobile force in the Continental United States to furnish troops required for an expeditionary force. In addition, the Regular Army is to furnish garrisons for overseas possessions, garrisons for harbor defenses in the Continental United States, forces to deal with internal emergencies, and instructors for units for the training of civilian components. Finally, the Regular Army furnishes the necessary overhead for the administration of the entire military system in time of peace and the framework for the administrative establish-

27. *National Defense Act*, Section 3.

28. *Ibid.*, Section 5.

30. *Report of Secretary of War, 1931*, p. 50.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 51-52.

32. Cf. p. 149.

33. *Annual Report Secretary of War, 1930*, p. 94.

34. Cf. *Military Organization of the United States*, cited, p. 9.

ment and the expansion required by mobilization.³⁵

War Department estimates of the troops required for the first stage of mobilization and to provide a mobile force have been based largely on what Congress would provide, rather than on actual requirements. In 1919 the Chief of Staff requested sufficient troops to maintain twenty infantry divisions and one cavalry division at a peace strength of approximately 350,000 men. In time of emergency these units would be expanded to provide a force of 1,250,000 men, immediately available to repel invasion or to serve as an expeditionary force, while the general mobilization is proceeding.³⁶

This plan depended upon a large standing army and a trained reserve. It was abandoned with passage of the National Defense Act authorizing a total of 280,000 enlisted men, and eliminating universal citizens' training. On the basis of a peace-time strength of 280,000, the General Staff revised its estimate and approved the nine infantry division plan mentioned above. This organization has been retained in theory, although it cannot be said to exist except on paper. Beginning in 1922 Congress reduced the peace strength of the Regular Army by annual appropriation acts from 280,000 enlisted men to 125,000 and less, on the theory that the international situation did not justify the expense of a larger force. The War Department protested that this strength would not permit mobilization in time of war, as contemplated by the National Defense Act, and in 1926 submitted a project based on a peace strength of 165,000 men and 14,000 officers. This strength, according to the General Staff, would permit an organization of three infantry divisions, one cavalry division, and six reinforced brigades in the territorial United States, and represented an irreducible minimum.³⁷ It would provide a mobile force, but would be insufficient to carry out immediate mobilization. The increased strength requested by the General Staff in this project was not accepted by Congress.

At the present time not more than three infantry divisions out of the nine divisions contemplated for raising a field army in an emergency are maintained on an active basis; their strength, however, is well below the minimum peace-time strength. The other divisions are maintained on a semi-active basis or exist only on paper with no active regiment assigned to them and no per-

manent headquarters staff or officer personnel. The strength of the active divisions, moreover, is distributed among the service schools, training camps, and administrative offices in Washington and elsewhere. In 1930 there remained available only 53,954 men for the formation of a mobile force capable of taking the field on the outbreak of war, and coast artillery sufficient to furnish only 10 per cent required for coastal and harbor defenses in time of war.³⁸ These forces, however, are not organized in units capable of taking the field on short notice, but are distributed throughout more than 200 army posts in the nine corps areas into which the country is divided under the National Defense Act.

As a result of this distribution, retained by the War Department, the Regular Army is unable to perform its mission as a covering force in case of war. An effective expeditionary force of more than a single full strength division could not be raised in case of sudden emergency without the greatest difficulty. In order to raise a field army of nine full divisions, as contemplated in the War Department plan, it would be necessary to induct approximately 200,000 new men into the regular forces, to expand the active and semi-active divisions to full war strength and to organize the "paper" divisions before the army would be available for service in the field. In case of a general mobilization the officer personnel of the Regular Army would be required for training the two National Guard armies and the three reserve armies, as well as the nine regular divisions.

This situation is admitted, reluctantly, by the General Staff. In his annual report for 1930, General Summerall complained that "the readiness of Regular Army units for immediate service in an emergency is impaired by the fact that the law has made no provision for a trained reserve to permit of their prompt expansion to war strength."³⁹ But the readiness of the Regular Army is further impaired by the War Department's attempt to use it primarily for the purpose of training just such a reserve force. By expressly requiring "immediate mobilization" without making any provision for an effective reserve, the law places the War Department in a serious dilemma. The General Staff is compelled either to admit the inadequacy of the law and to neglect preparations for general mobilization (while building up an effective mobile force), or to abandon the mobile force in deference to the ideal of immediate mobilization. While the General Staff has sought to find a middle ground, it has moved steadily in the direction of the second alternative and sacrificed the mobile

35. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1930*, p. 91. General Summerall lists nine special missions assigned to the Regular Army of which the above are the most important.

36. *Senate Hearings*, cited, p. 51.

37. *Hearings before the Committee on Military Appropriations*, House of Representatives, Sixty-ninth Congress, 2nd Session, January 8, 1927, "History of Army Appropriation Estimates, 1928, Major Army Project No. 1."

38. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1930*, p. 95.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

force in the interests of citizens' military training—the only substitute for a trained reserve offered in the National Defense Act. That the result is not altogether satisfactory is admitted by the General Staff itself. In 1930 the Chief of Staff characterized the training received by Reserve Officer Training Corps graduates as inadequate to fit them for the performance of their duties.⁴⁰

Providing garrisons for overseas possessions is another important mission assigned to the Regular Army. The chief outlying possessions of the United States are the Philippine Islands, the Panama Canal and Hawaii. Apparently it has not been the policy of the War Department to maintain a permanent force in the Philippines capable of defending the Islands in event of war. General Wood, in 1919, declared that "unless we hold sea control in the Pacific we shall lose the Philippines sooner or later in case of war. We can hold, with the garrisons I propose [a full division] for a number of months a base in these Islands."⁴¹ General Wood asserted that a field army of approximately 250,000 men would be required to hold the Philippines in time of war if the United States did not have control of the sea. General O'Ryan told a Senate Committee in 1919 that if the Navy should lose control of the sea we would be unable even to hold a base in the Islands and "would lose the garrisons to any great and nearby power capable of landing large armies there."⁴² The War Department, however, has apparently assumed that the mission of the Philippine garrison, supported by the Philippine Scouts (a native constabulary authorized in the National Defense Act), is to maintain a base at Manila in case of war. The strength of the Philippine garrison in 1931 was 4,660 regular troops and 6,492 Philippine Scouts,⁴³ a garrison which General Summerville held to be "insufficient for its mission."⁴⁴

The missions of the garrisons at Hawaii and the Panama Canal are to defend these important strategic centers. General Wood testified that the Island of Oahu of the Hawaiian group could be held "more or less indefinitely provided we take the necessary steps to properly garrison and fortify it."⁴⁵ For this purpose he and many others recommended a full strength division (27,000 men) in addition to the coast artillery. This strength has never been provided (the Hawaiian garrison consisted of 14,843 officers and men in 1931⁴⁶) and the plans for its de-

fense are understood to require the transport of additional regular troops from the mainland within the first few days after the declaration of an emergency. The defense of the Panama Canal in time of war would rest jointly upon the Army and Navy, according to the accepted strategy, with the Navy responsible for preventing the establishment of a shore base by the enemy, and for repelling a hostile fleet. The army has installed elaborate coast defenses and anti-aircraft guns, but the normal peace-time garrison consists of infantry troops, Coast Artillery forces and Air Corps troops—a total of approximately 9,000 officers and men. As in the case of Hawaii, the defense plans call for the dispatch of additional troops in an emergency, which is rendered more difficult by the failure to provide an effective mobile force in the territorial United States.

THE NATIONAL GUARD

The National Guard, as constituted under the National Defense Act, has two functions: first, as the organized militia of the state to which it pertains; and, second, as a component of the Army of the United States. As a state force it may be employed at the discretion of the Governor within certain limitations defined by the federal Constitution. It may be called into federal service only by act of Congress. As a component of the United States Army its chief mission is to provide the second line of defense and to come to the assistance of the Regular Army. The War Department mobilization plan calls upon the National Guard to furnish two of the six field armies ultimately contemplated in case of war.

The strength of the National Guard is limited by law to 800 enlisted men to each Senator and Representative, a maximum of 420,000 men. Since 1921, however, the strength of the National Guard has ranged from 113,000 to 190,000, including officers. The organization of all units of the National Guard is the same as that of the Regular Army, and for purposes of mobilization National Guard Divisions are assigned on paper to the nine corps areas into which the territorial United States is divided. In time of peace, however, many National Guard units are not organized into active divisions. Mobilization would require the expansion of an active force of approximately 190,000 officers and men to two field armies of 18 infantry divisions and four cavalry divisions—a total of nearly 600,000 combatant troops. To expand the National Guard to the full strength contemplated in the mobilization plan would be even more difficult than the expansion of the Regular Army. The existing staff organization is inadequate, and

40. Cf. p. 158.

41. *Senate Hearings*, cited, Vol. I, p. 624.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 513.

43. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1931*, p. 174.

44. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1930*, p. 96.

45. *Senate Hearings*, cited, Vol. I, p. 624.

46. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1931*, p. 174.

the reserve officers who would be called on to train and organize the new units lack the experience to carry out the plans without the aid of Regular Army officers, most of whom would be needed for mobilization of the Regular forces. The rank and file, moreover, would be raised through the application of a draft law and would have no previous military training whatever.

The National Guard is supported wholly or in part by federal appropriations and is given close federal supervision through the Militia Bureau in the War Department. This Bureau is headed by a National Guard officer.⁴⁷

ORGANIZED RESERVES

In theory, the Organized Reserves constitute a reservoir of trained officers and men in all branches, to supplement the Regular Army and the National Guard and complete the first line of defense in a general mobilization. As noted above, both the War Department and the advocates of a citizens' army originally sought to introduce universal military training to weld these organized units into an effective trained reserve.⁴⁸ Such a system, had it found the support of public opinion and been adopted by Congress, would have given the United States a body of partially trained men similar to the trained reserves of European conscript armies. Without any form of universal training, however, the creation of an effective reserve capable of fulfilling its rôle in the mobilization scheme was rendered extremely difficult, if not impossible.

As a substitute for a trained reserve, Congress authorized the Officers' Reserve Corps and the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and provided for military training in schools and colleges. While the Officers' Reserve Corps has been built up to a paper strength of approximately 120,000, the Enlisted Reserve (which under the conscript system provides the trained troops) barely exceeds 6,000 men. Reliance upon this "reservoir of trained men" to supplement the Regular Army and the National Guard is scarcely to be expected, and the enlisted Reserve Corps has been regrettably discounted in the mobilization scheme. The reasons officially offered for failure to develop the Enlisted Reserve are that it would duplicate the functions of the National Guard and cost a prohibitive amount to train.⁴⁹

The Officers' Reserve Corps has been steadily expanded in strength, although the requirements in training and experience have not been correspondingly tightened. It is composed of selected citizens who vol-

untarily accept commissions in all grades and branches of the Army, and are liable to service in time of a national emergency. They may be ordered to active duty at any time, but not for more than fifteen days in one calendar year. Originally the Reserve Corps was composed largely of World War veterans in all grades who volunteered after the Armistice. In recent years many of these officers have passed from the lists and their places have been taken by graduates of the R.O.T.C. and C.M.T.C. Thus while the numerical strength of the Officers' Reserve has increased from 76,000 in 1923 to 120,000⁵⁰ in 1931, the field experience of the personnel has decreased with the retirement of World War veterans and the influx of young college graduates. A large number of Reserve Officers carried on the lists have taken no active training in several years and are assigned to no reserve unit. Nevertheless, the War Department is compelled to place on this corps of officers the greatest responsibility for the successful carrying-out of the mobilization plan.

CITIZENS' MILITARY TRAINING

Military training in the colleges was not entirely a new departure, for the so-called land grant colleges have been providing courses in military tactics since 1862.⁵¹ Under the National Defense Act, however, the War Department provides Regular Army officers as military instructors at 326 schools and colleges maintaining R.O.T.C. units; it also supplies uniforms and commutation, per diem allowances to enrolled students in their junior and senior years, transportation to and from camps and equipment of various kinds.⁵²

Military training in the schools and colleges has been opposed by large numbers of civic, religious, and educational bodies on the ground that it brings the War Department into the civil education system in the rôle of instructor in citizenship, history, economics, patriotism and preparedness; and that it is part of a program "to keep America military-minded."⁵³ Supporters of military education in schools and colleges, which in-

52. This figure includes 12,000 Reserve Officers serving in the National Guard. Under the National Defense Act, National Guard officers and enlisted men are required to subscribe to a "dual oath," under which they swear allegiance to the United States and to the particular state in which they enlist. (National Defense Act, Section 70.)

53. Under the Morill Act of 1862, the government was authorized to give land to the states which would agree to maintain "at least one college where the object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . ." Acts of Congress, July 2, 1862, Chap. 130, Sec. 4 (12 Stat. 503).

54. National Defense Act, Sections 40, 47, 55c, etc.

55. For the case against citizens' military training, cf. the speech of Representative Ross A. Collins of Mississippi in the House of Representatives, Congressional Record, January 10, 1931; cf. also George A. Coe, *The War Department as Educator*, published by Committee on Militarism in Education, New York.

clude such organizations as the R.O.T.C. Association of the United States and a number of patriotic societies, contend that the system possesses general educational values as a result of physical training, training in obedience, respect for law and citizenship, as well as furthering military preparedness.⁵⁶

The effectiveness of this training in relation to the creation of a trained officer reserve, however, has been questioned by the War Department as well as in Congress. Representative Ross A. Collins of Mississippi, chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations in charge of War Department appropriations, characterized the system as "expensive and inefficient" and of no military value.⁵⁷

General Summerall, in his final report as Chief of Staff in 1930, characterized the training received at R.O.T.C. units and camps as inadequate to fit graduates for the performance of their duties. He stated:

"... the military instruction received by a graduate of the R.O.T.C. during his four year course does not exceed 870 hours, equivalent to

about four months' continuous instruction. Under present conditions his active training after being commissioned in the Officers' Reserve Corps does not, on the average, exceed two weeks every three years, which is hardly sufficient to maintain his efficiency in its initial level... With all due acknowledgment of the splendid corps of R.O.T.C. graduates, it must be recognized that they will require a further period of training on mobilization to fit them for the performance of their duties. A similar estimate," he added, "applies to the graduates of the C.M.T.C. who now furnish a very small portion of the annual increment of Reserve Officers."⁵⁸

During the summer of 1930, 376,649 citizens completed the training at 53 citizens' military camps held throughout the nine corps areas. Of this number only 114 were commissioned second lieutenants upon graduation from the advanced courses of training.⁵⁹ In 1931 R.O.T.C. units were maintained at 220 universities and colleges and 106 high schools or secondary schools. The enrollment in the senior divisions was 85,802, in the junior divisions 41,865—a total of 127,667. The number of graduates commissioned in the Officers' Reserve Corps in the same year, however, was only 5,984.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

The military organization outlined in the preceding pages envisages the defense needs of the United States primarily in terms of the man-power which would be required in a war waged on the same scale and fought on the same principles as the World War. It assumes that mass armies will be employed in the future as in the past, that offensive as well as defensive operations are required, and that mobilization of the man-power of the nation is still essential to the defense of the United States (regardless of our relative geographical isolation) as long as there is any possibility of being drawn into a general war. On the strength of this theory the creation of a small but well-trained mobile force equipped to meet a sudden emergency has been sacrificed to the task of training a citizen reserve and building up a vast Officer Reserve Corps, which is officially regarded as inadequate to meet the requirements of mobilization.

In many respects the military problem of the United States is similar to that of Australia, which could be adequately defended, according to some military experts, by a

small mobile force equipped to repel invasion.⁶¹ In both cases, invasion would come from overseas, and in both cases defensive rather than offensive operations are the natural rôle of the Army—provided the primary object is to resist invasion. The primary object of the National Defense Act, however, is not confined to defense of American territory. The proposal of the American delegation at Geneva, nevertheless, and several official utterances of President Hoover seek to establish just such a limited objective. In his speech accepting renomination for President, Mr. Hoover declared: "I insist upon an Army and Navy of a strength which guarantees that no foreign soldier will land on American soil."⁶² This, it is pointed out, is a clear declaration of the object of the arms forces, compatible with our international commitments and within the military means. An army organized solely to defend American soil would be in full accord with the anti-war pact; it would not require offensive preparations and it would not be materially affected by the size or organization of foreign armies.

56. For a defense of citizens training, cf. Orvel Johnson, *Military Education in Our Schools and Colleges*, published by the R.O.T.C. Association of the United States.

57. *Congressional Record*, speech of Representative Ross A. Collins, January 10, 1931.

58. *Annual Report Secretary of War, 1930*, p. 93. Active training is not required of reserve officers after they have received their commissions.

59. *Annual Report of Secretary of War, 1931*, p. 217.

60. *Hearings before the Subcommittee of House Committee on Appropriations, Seventy-second Congress, War Department Appropriation Bill for 1933, Part I*, p. 814-815.

61. Cf. Liddell Hart, *The Remaking of Modern Armies*, cited, p. 32. Captain Hart contends that a small number of machine-grenade battalions could repel any conceivable invading army.

62. *New York Times*, August 12, 1932.